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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
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AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USMISSION NATO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

S E C R E T STATE 205823

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION STATE INFO VIENTIANE, PHNOM PENH,
SAIGON, RANGOON, KUALA LUMPUR, MANILA, K JAKARTA, SINGAPORE,
PARIS, CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, CHANG MAI, UDORN, TAIPEI,
DIA, DEA HQS, USSAG NKP, 13TH ADVON UDORN, AND KATHMANDU
FROM BANGKOK OCT 16, REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE

S E C R E T BANGKOK 16205

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, TH
SUBJ: THE NEW ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT CABINET

REF: FBIS BANGKOK D160648Z OCT 73
SECRET

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PRIME MINISTER SANYA THAMMASAK ANNOUNCED HIS NEW
CABINET (SEE REFERENCE) SHORTLY AFTER 1300 OCTOBER 16.
FOLLOWING ARE BRIEF BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES AND COMMENTS ON
THE MINISTERS: PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE: (REPORT

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ON PRIMIN SANYA REPORTED SEPTEL.)

1. SUKICH NIMMANHAEMIN IS THE NEW DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, LT. GEN. SAWAENG SENANARONG CONTINUES IN HIS FORMER POSITION UNDER THANOM AS MINISTER ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER. SUKICH IS A RESPECTED ELDER STATESMAN WHO WAS THAI AMBASSADOR TO INDIA, AND THEN TO WASHINGTON BEGINNING IN 1963. BEFORE THAT HE HAD BEEN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND ECONOMIC MINISTER IN 1958. HE LATER PUT IN A DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE AS EDUCATION MINISTER. HE HAS BEEN RETIRED FOR SOME YEARS BUT FOR THE LAST YEAR HAS BEEN WORKING ON A "UNIVERSITY OF THE AIR" ADULT EDUCATION RADIO PROGRAM. SANYA RESPECTS HIM AS AN ELDER STATESMAN AND AS AN "AJARN"OR PROFESSOR. SAWAENG HAS SANYA'S DEEP PERSONAL RESPECT, BUT IS NOT KNOWN FOR THE FRESHNESS OR PRECISION OF HIS IDEAS.

2. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. ACM DAWEE CHULLASAPYA IS APPOINTED DEFENSE MINISTER, AND ADM. THAWIL RAYANONOND AND GEN. SURAKIJ MAYALARP ARE THE DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTERS. DAWEE HAS A REPUTATION FOR LANDING ON HIS FEET DESPITE CHANGES OF REGIME. SANYA MAY HAVE GIVEN DAWEE THE DEFENSE PORTFOLIO IN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS POSITION AS THE RANKING MILITARY OFFICER REMAINING IN THAILAND. IT STRIKES US A GOOD WAY TO GET HIM OUT OF HIS JOB AS ASSISTANT SUPREME COMMANDER, AND PAVES THE WAY FOR DOWNGRADING OR ABOLISHING THAT INSTITUTION. HE HAS LONG BEEN A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF THE USG AND SHOULD DO A GREAT DEAL TO SMOOTH THE WAY FOR US IN TERMS OF THE ON-GOING ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUR MILITARY PRESENCE HERE. THAWIL IS A CARRYOVER IN THE SAME POSITION FROM THE LAST CABINET. SURAKIJ HAS BEEN CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ROYAL THAI ARMY UNTIL THE LATEST MILITARY PROMOTION LIST AT WHICH TIME HE BECAME CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE SUPREME COMMAND. HE HAS BEEN INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERA-

TIONS COMMAND (CSOC) AFFAIRS AND IS ALSO A LONG AND CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF OURS. SURAKIJ HAS ALWAYS BEEN EXTREMELY CLOSE TO PRAPHAT, AND THOUGH THE DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER JOB IS LESS POWERFUL THAN THE ONE IN THE SUPREME COMMAND, HIS "PROMOTION" MAY BE INTENDED TO QUELL UNEASINESS AMONG PRAPHAT'S OLD SUPPORTERS. HE IS ALSO A CAPABLE MILITARY MAN. THE REMOVAL OF THE FOUR TOP SUPREME COMMAND FIGURES (THANOM, PRAPHAT, DAWEE, AND SURAKIJ) ALSO POINTS TO THAT INSTITUTION'S POSSIBLE DEMISE.

3. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. CHARUNPHAN ISSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA IS FOREIGN MINISTER AND MAJ. GEN. CHARTCHAI CHUNHAWAN IS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER. THIS SURPRISE TURNABOUT ELEVATES CHARUNPHAN FROM UNDER SECRETARY AND

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PLACES HIM OVER CHARTCHAI WHO, WHILE RETAINING THE
SAME TITLE, WILL PROBABLY HAVE VASTLY LESS AUTHORITY
AND LATITUDE IN THAI FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAN HE ENJOYED
DURING THE PREVIOUS TEN MONTHS. CHARUNPHAN CAN PROBABLY
BE EXPECTED TO CONDUCT THAI FOREIGN AFFAIRS MUCH THE
WAY HE DID DURING THE NEC PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 1971 TO
DECEMBER 1972. THIS INVOLVED A REASONABLY CAUTIOUS STAFF
APPROACH. IT WILL PROBABLY INVOLVE MUCH LESS OF THE KIND OF
FLASHY FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES THAT CHARTCHAI GENERATED.
HE MAY ALSO MODERATE OR BLUNT MUCH OF CHARTCHAI'S INFLUENCE
OVER QUESTIONS RELATING TO US PRESENCE AND OUGHT IN SOME
WAYS TO CAUSE US SOMEWHAT FEWER PROBLEMS.

4. INTERIOR MINISTRY. KOMOL WANNAPRAPA IS INTERIOR
MINISTER, AND PUANG SUWANNARAT AND POL. LT. GEN.
CHUMPHOL LOHACHALA ARE DEPUTY MINISTERS. KOMOL'S
APPOINTMENT IS A SURPRISING AND POSSIBLY BRILLIANT
STROKE WHICH MAY GO A LONG WAY TOWARD CHANGING THE
IMAGE OF THE INTERIOR MINISTRY AS THE PERSONAL CREATION
OF FIELD MARSHAL PRAPHAT, BELIEVED TO BE THE
PERPETRATOR OF MUCH OF THE SOCIAL INJUSTICE FELT
NATIONWIDE IN THAILAND. KOMOL IS A LONG-TIME JUDICIAL
ASSOCIATE OF SANYA'S AND ENJOYS HIS COMPLETE CONFIDENCE
AND RESPECT. DURING HIS TERM AS MINISTER OF JUSTICE IN
THE POST-NEC CABINET, KOMOL GAINED GREAT STATURE WITH
THE PUBLIC AND THE STUDENTS IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN
OF THE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING THE THUNG YAI HUNTING
SECRET

SCANDAL. IT WAS KOMOL'S COMMITTEE WHICH DECIDED TO
PROSECUTE THE SUSPECTED OFFENDERS IN THE COURTS. THIS
DECISION VIRTUALLY DEFUSED THE MAJOR STUDENT/PRESS COMMOTION
OF LAST APRIL AND MAY (SEE BANGKOK 8990). PUANG SUWANNARAT
HOLDS THE SAME POSITION AS BEFORE AND WILL BE THE
HIGHEST RANKING CONTINUOUS LINK IN THE INTERIOR
MINISTRY. POL. LT. GEN. CHUMPHOL LOHACHALA HAS BEEN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE
DEPARTMENT (TNPD) AND COMMISSIONER OF THE CRIMINAL
INVESTIGATION BUREAU. HE HAS WORKED VERY CLOSELY WITH
US ON NARCOTICS AFFAIRS, AND IS A CAPABLE OFFICER. HIS APPOINT-
MENT COULD ENHANCE BILATERAL COOPERATION ON NARCOTICS SUPPRES-
SION. CHUMPHOL IS ALSO CLOSE TO THE KING. USOM POLICE ADVISORS
HAVE A HIGH OPINION OF CHUMPOL.

5. THE NEW JUSTICE MINISTER, PRAKORB HUTASINGH, IS A
FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE SUPREME COURT AND ANOTHER CLOSE
AND RESPECTED ASSOCIATE OXIJANYA, WHO RECENTLY BROUGHT
HIM INTO THE THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY COUNCIL. DEPUTY
MINISTER SOMPHOB HOTRAKIT RETAINS THE SAME POSITION HE
HELD IN THE IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING CABINET.

6. OSOT KOSIN'S APPOINTMENT AS INDUSTRY MINISTER FOLLOWS

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HIS POSITION AS DEPUTY COMMERCE MINISTER. HE IS A WEATIHY BUSINESSMAN WHO TENDS TO VIEW HIS HEAVY WORK LOAD AS AN INTRUSION ON HIS LEISURE TIME. HE IS PROBABLY NOT A STRONG ADMINISTRATOR. THE MISSION IS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH HIM, AND HE HAS A REPUTATION FOR FRIEND-LINESS TOWARD AMERICANS. SAARD HONGYONT CONTINUES FROM THE OLD REGIME AS DEPUTY INDUSTRY MINISTER.

7. BOONMA WONGSAOXN, THE NEW FINANCE MINISTER, WAS PREVIOUSLY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE UNTIL HIS RESIGNATION LAST AUGUST OVER A DISAGREEMENT WITH HIS SUPERIORS, PROBABLY OVER THE BAHT REVALUATION. HE IS CONSIDERED A MAN OF GREAT PERSONAL INTEGRITY AND HONESTY, BUT IS BASICALLY A BUREAUCRAT UNLIKELY TO EXERCISE MUCH INITIATIVE. YUA SUSAYAN, DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER, WAS FORMERLY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE (NOW BURNED OUT) REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

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8. THE EDUCATION MINISTRY RETAINS THE SAME DISAPPOINT-MENT LEADERSHIP WITH ABHAI CHANTRAVIMOL AS MINISTER AND BOONSOM MARTIN AS DEPUTY.

9. THE NEW MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES, NOC. CHAKRABANDH PENSIRI CHAKRABANDHU, 62, IS THE RECTOR OF KASETSART AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY. HE IS WEAK ON ENFORCING HIS DECISIONS AND PRONE TO COMPRO-MISE. HIS DEPUTY, POL. GEN. PICHAI KULLAVANICH, IS A HOLDOVER FROM THE PREVIOUS CABINET.

10. THE NEW COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER, ADM. CHALIE SINHUSOPHON, MOVES UP FROM HIS POSITION AS DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER IN PREVIOUS CABINET. HE IS A GENIAL INDIVIDUAL, AND FRIENDLY TO AMERICANS, BUT NO WORLD-BEATER. POL. LT. GEN. PRACHUAB SUNTHARANGKUL'S APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER NO DOUBT REFLECTS IN PART HIS LONG YEARS IN CHARGE OF THE PORT AUTHORITY. IT MAY ALSO REFLECT SANYA'S WISH TO RID THE THAI NATIONAL POLICE DEPARTMENT (TNPD) OF CLOSE PRAPHAT ASSOCIATES. UNLESS PRACHUAB RETAINS HIS JOB AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, HIS NEW APPOINT-MENT MAY ALSO DISLOCATE TEMPORARILY OUR CLOSE WORKING ASSOCIATION WITH THE POLICE ON NARCOTICS SUPPRESSION AFFAIRS. PRACHUAB HAS BEEN A HIGHLY CAPABLE POLICE OFFICIAL, AND WE WOULD BE SORRY TO SEE HIM LEAVE TNPD.

11. THE NEW COMMERCE MINISTER, CHARNCHAI LEETHAWORN, HAS BEEN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE EXCISE DEPARTMENT AND WILL BE, AT THE AGE OF 42, THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF THE CABINET. LIKE BOONMA, HE IS REGARDED AS HAVING STRONG PERSONAL PRINCIPLES. HE IS A CAPABLE, WELL TRAINED,

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DEDICATED CIVIL SERVANT. CHAROON SIBUNRUANG, THE NEW
DEPUTY COMMERCE MINISTER, IS A VALUABLE, SELF-TAUGHT,
OUT-SPOKEN, AND SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN WHO ONLY
RECENTLY RETIRED FROM THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT OF THE
BOARD OF TRADE. HE CONDUCTED ANNUALLY THE NEGOTIATIONS
WITH TAIWAN AND JAPAN FOR THE SALE OF THAI CORN.
ALTHOUGH HE IS PROBABLY 70 OR OLDER, AND FREQUENTLY
REFERRED TO HIS AGE AND FEELING OF FATIGUE WHILE
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (BOT), HE NEVERTHELESS
SECRET

HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN MANY BUSINESS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES
AND HAS TENDED TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH THE THINKING
AND APPROACH OF THE MORE PROMISING MIDDLE LEVEL MEMBERS
OF THE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY.

12. UDOM POSAKRISNA, THE NEW PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTER,
IS A DOCTOR AT SIRIRAJ HOSPITAL AND HAS JUST RECEIVED
AN HONOR AWARD FROM THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT. HIS
DEPUTY, SEM PRINGPUANGKAEW, IS THE FORMER DIRECTOR
OF THE WOMEN'S HOSPITAL IN BANGKOK.

13. AROON SORATHES, THE NEW MINISTER IN CHARGE OF
STATE OWNED UNIVERSITIES, IS THE RECTOR OF CHULALONGKORN
UNIVERSITY.

14. COMMENT: MANY OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT THIS CABINET
IS INTENDED AS A CARETAKER GOVERNMENT FOR THE NEXT SIX
MONTHS OR SO UNTIL THE CONSTITUTION IS PROMULGATED AND
ELECTIONS ARE HELD. MOST OF SANYA'S CHOICES ARE MEN OF
UNIMPEACHABLE REPUTATION WHOM HE RESPECTS PERSONALLY AND CAN
WORK WITH. MANY OF THEM PROBABLY DO NOT HAVE EXTENSIVE
ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS, NOR THE IMAGINATION OR DRIVE
NEEDED FOR THE LONG HAUL, BUT THEIR REPUTATIONS FOR
HONESTY OUGHT TO BOLSTER THE GOVERNMENT'S SAGGING PUBLIC
IMAGE AND CARRY THEM FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

15. THE CABINET IS MADE UP LARGELY OF FAIRLY COMPETENT CAREER
TECHNICIANS, ALMOST ALL OF WHOM ARE FAMILIAR THROUGH THEIR
PARTICIPATION IN PREVIOUS THAI GOVERNMENTS OVER PAST DECADE.
THUS THEY REPRESENT CONTINUITY RATHER THAN CHANGE AND
INCLUDE MANY OF OUR PAST CLOSE COLLABORATORS, MOST NOTABLY
THE PERENNIAL MARSHAL DAWEE. WE ANTICIPATE NO SIGNIFICANT
CHANGE, THEREFORE, IN RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT NOR
ANY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE EFFECT ON QUESTIONS OF INTEREST
TO US. THE QUESTION REMAINS WHETHER THE STUDENTS WILL
ACCEPT SUCH A CABINET BECAUSE OF ITS TRADITIONAL LOOK AND
THE INCLUSION OF SEVERAL MILITARY FIGURES AND, IF THEY
DON'T WISH TO, CAN THEY FORCE SOME MODIFICATION.
UNGER

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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